



An Introduction to the Arctic Council and the Sustainable Development Working Group

Ann Meceda
Arctic Affairs Officer, Acting Chair SDWG
U.S. Department of State

September 19, 2016

Arctic Council Overview



- High level forum, not an international organization
- 8 Arctic States make decisions by consensus
- Mandate: environmental protection and **sustainable development**
- “The Arctic Council should not deal with matters related to military security”
- Role of Permanent Participants



Observers in the Council

12 State Observers

Germany (1998)	Poland (1998)
United Kingdom (1998)	The Netherlands (1998)
France (2000)	Spain (2006)
Italy (2013)	India (2013)
China (2013)	Republic of Korea (2013)
Japan (2013)	Singapore (2013)

20 Inter-Governmental, Inter-Parliamentary and Non-Governmental Observers

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (1998)
United Nations Environment Program (1998)
Nordic Council of Ministers (1998)
Standing Committee of the Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (1998)
International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies (2000)
International Union for the Conservation of Nature (2000)
North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (2000)
United Nations Development Program (2002)
Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (2004)

International Arctic Science Committee (1998)
Northern Forum (1998)
World Wide Fund for Nature-Global Arctic Program (1998)
International Union for Circumpolar Health (1998)
Advisory Committee on Protection of the Seas (2000)
Association of World Reindeer Herders (2000)
Circumpolar Conservation Union (2000)
International Arctic Social Sciences Association (2000)
International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (2002)
University of the Arctic (2002)
Arctic Cultural Gateway (2004)

16 Pending Observer Applications

Turkey • Greece • Switzerland • Mongolia • Oceana • Association of Oil and Gas Producers • OSPAR (the Oslo-Paris Commission) • Greenpeace • International Hydrographic Organization • Association of Polar Early Career Scientists • World Meteorological Organization • Norwegian Scientific Academy for Polar Research • International Chamber of Shipping • International Council for the Exploration of the Sea • West Nordic Council • National Geographic Society

U.S. Chairmanship

- April 2015 – May 2017
- Finland next
- Second U.S. Chairmanship in the 20 year Council History
- “One Arctic: Shared Opportunities, Challenges and Responsibilities”



U.S. Chairmanship Team



Chair of the Arctic Council
Secretary of State John Kerry

Coordinator of the Chairmanship
Special Representative for
the Arctic, Admiral Robert Papp



**Special Advisor on Arctic Science
and Policy**
Fran Ulmer

Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials
Ambassador David Balton



U.S. Senior Arctic Official
Julie Gourley



U.S. Chairmanship Pillars

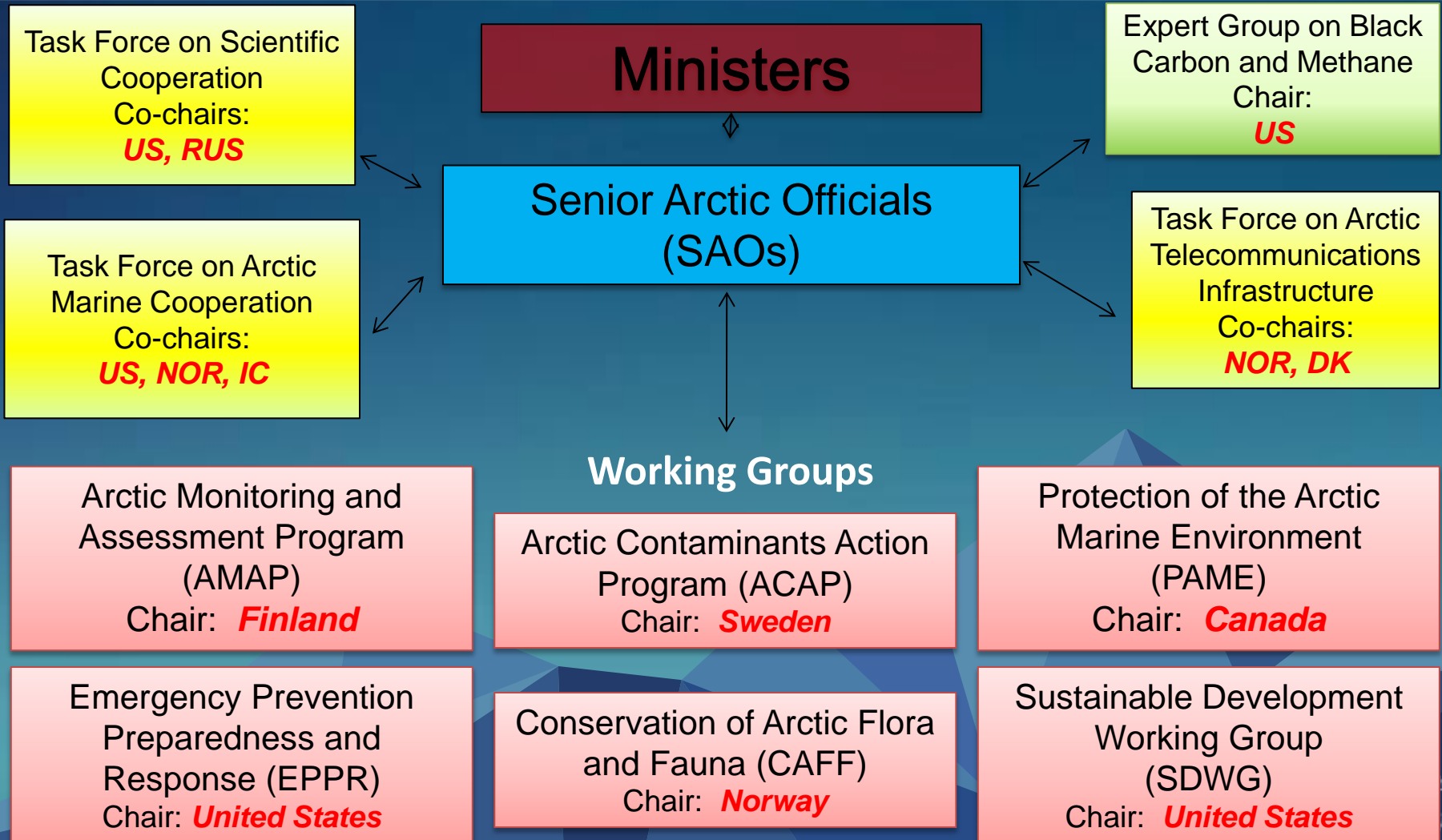
- “One Arctic: Shared Opportunities, Challenges and Responsibilities”
 - Improve economic and living conditions
 - Address the impacts of climate change
 - Promote Arctic Ocean safety, security and stewardship



Arctic Council Structure

2015 – 2017 Chairmanship: **UNITED STATES**

*Six indigenous groups (“Permanent Participants”) participate at all levels



Mandate of the SDWG

- “to advance sustainable development in the Arctic, including opportunities to protect and enhance the environment and the economies, culture and health of indigenous communities and of other inhabitants of the Arctic, as well as to improve the environmental, economic and social conditions of Arctic communities as a whole.”

Barrow, Alaska, October 13, 2000

SDWG Projects

Include:

- **Water, Sanitation and Health**
- Renewable Energy
- Telecommunications Infrastructure
- Suicide Prevention and Mental Wellness
- Preservation of Traditional Food Culture

WASH Project: Improving Health through Safe and Affordable Access to Household Running Water and Sewer in Arctic and Sub-Arctic communities

- To catalyze further domestic and international work and cooperation
- Co-lead with Kingdom of Denmark
- Two conferences:
 - ARTEK, Sisimuit, Greenland - April 2016
 - WIHAH, Anchorage, AK – Sept 2016

Project Desired Outcomes

- The conferences, their reports, and relevant side meetings will:
 - promote the exchange of ideas regarding technical, governance, and regulatory approaches and flexibility for safe sanitation systems.
- Survey of circumpolar WASH infrastructure
- Summary report to Ministers



ONE ARCTIC

ARCTIC COUNCIL
U.S. CHAIRMANSHIP
2015-2017